





NEW YORK CITY.

THE TRUTH IS, CAPTAIN, I HAVEN'T THE SLIGHTEST IDEA WHAT HAPPENED HERE.

BULLFINCH STREET (FORMERLY FABLETOWN).

WELL, ANYONE CAN SEE *WHAT* HAPPENED, BUT WHAT I MEAN IS, BARRING FURTHER INVESTIGATION, I DON'T HAVE A *CLUE* AS TO THE CAUSE.

I'D QUESTION THE SURVIVORS, BUT THERE *AREN'T* ANY-- AND NO BODIES, EITHER.

AT LEAST NONE THAT WE'VE LOCATED SO FAR. PLACE SEEMS DESERTED. WE'LL BE A WEEK AT *LEAST* SEARCHING THE RUBBLE TO MAKE SURE.

WELL, THIS DIDN'T JUST *HAPPEN*, LIEUTENANT. NATURAL DISASTERS DON'T CONFINE THEMSELVES TO ONE SMALL CITY BLOCK.

# THE BLUE HORIZON

## Chapter five of THE DARK AGES



Bill Willingham  
writer/creator

Mark Buckingham  
penciller

Andrew Depoy  
inker

Lee Loughbridge  
colors

Todd Klein  
letters

James Jean  
cover

Angela Rufino  
associate editor

Shelly Bond  
editor



AND THE ABSENCE OF VICTIMS SEEMS TO PROVE THIS WAS A PLANNED INCIDENT.

PEOPLE DON'T JUST HAPPEN TO EVACUATE AN ENTIRE NEIGHBORHOOD FOR NO REASON AT ALL. SOMEHOW THEY *KNEW* WHAT WAS COMING.

AND THAT MEANS DELIBERATE SABOTAGE. I THINK A FINE YOUNG INVESTIGATIVE OFFICER LIKE YOURSELF SHOULD'VE FIGURED OUT THAT MUCH BY NOW.

FIND ME EVIDENCE OF EXPLOSIVES, LIEUTENANT.

THAT'S JUST IT, SIR. I'VE LOOKED AND THERE AREN'T ANY.

NOTHING! NIX! NADA! NOT SO MUCH AS A TRACE.

DESPITE YOUR OFT-REPEATED OPINION OF ME, UNCLE BOB, I DO ACTUALLY KNOW WHAT I'M DOING.

BUT THIS ONE'S A PUZZLER.

WHAT THE HELL--?

WOULD YOU LOOK AT THIS FANCY GUY?

EXCUSE ME, FELLA, BUT YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO--HOW THE HELL DID YOU GET BEYOND THE POLICE BARRICADES?

YOU PEOPLE DON'T BELONG HERE. YOU STINK OF BASE MORTALITY WHERE THIS WAS CLEARLY THE DWELLING OF IMMORTALS.

I'VE COME, HAVING CROSSED IMMEASURABLE SPACES, TO SEEK OUT AND CHASTISE THOSE WHO'VE LEACHED MY POWERS FOR THEIR RIDICULOUS WITCHING CLOAK AND WITCHING WELL.

YOU'RE CLEARLY NOT THEM, AND I CAN'T HAVE YOU INTERFERING WITH MY IMPORTANT WORK.







SO LEAVE NOW AND NEVER COME BACK. FORGET THIS PLACE FOR ALL TIME.

THIS IS MY COMMAND TO YOU AND ALL LIKE YOU.



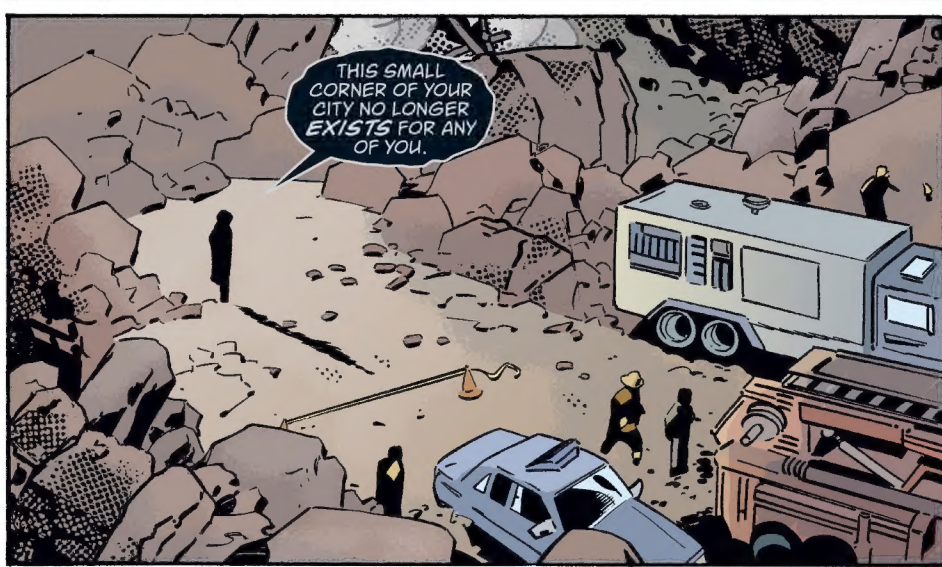
THE STREET BELONGS TO ME NOW.

Y-YES SSSIR.

ASSS YOU C-COMMAND.



THAT'S IT. MOVE ALONG SMARTLY, LITTLE MAYFLIES, LEST YOU INCUR YOUR OWN SCOLDINGS.



THIS SMALL CORNER OF YOUR CITY NO LONGER EXISTS FOR ANY OF YOU.





AND NOW--

¡ACHT-PHUUU!:

--ONE TOOTH EACH FROM FREDDY AND MOUSE.



SPAT UP TO WORK MY DESIRE.



WHO CALLS US BACK FROM BEYOND THE VEIL--

--THROUGH WHICH WE'RE NOT GIVEN TO PASS ON OUR OWN?



YOUR MASTER CALLS YOU, AND THAT'S ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW.

THIRTY-TWO TIMES I'LL BE ABLE TO SUMMON YOU TO DO MY WILL.



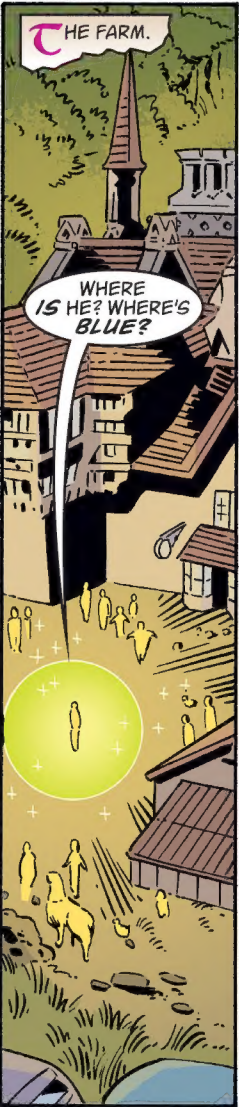
WELL, *SLIGHTLY* LESS OFTEN FOR YOU, FREDDY, BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T TAKE QUITE THE DEVOTED CARE OF YOUR **TEETH** THAT YOUR FRIEND MOUSE DID.





YOUR FIRST TASK IS TO SEARCH WHAT REMAINS OF THESE NEW RUINS.

FIND ME ONE OF THE SO-CALLED FABLES WHO SO RECENTLY DWELLED HERE-- IF ANY STILL REMAIN.



THE FARM.

WHERE IS HE? WHERE'S BLUE?



FLYCATCHER!

UH...I MEAN, KING AMBROSE! THANK GOD YOU'RE HERE!

I CAME AS SOON AS I HEARD! TAKE ME TO HIM!





I WARN YOU, HE'S IN BAD SHAPE. YOU NEED TO **PREPARE** YOURSELF, SO YOU DON'T LOOK SHOCKED OR SCARED IN FRONT OF HIM. WE WANT TO KEEP HIS **HOPES** UP.

JUST GET ME TO HIS SIDE.

IMMEDIATELY.



WE'VE TRIED EVERYTHING FROM MEDICINE TO SORCERY, BUT NEITHER SWINEHEART, NOR TOTENKINDER, NOR ANYONE **ELSE** HAS BEEN ABLE TO **HELP** HIM.

YOU'RE OUR **LAST HOPE**, FLY.

WE NEED A **BONA FIDE MIRACLE**. CAN YOU **GIVE** US ONE?



I'VE SUMMONED UP ALL THE MAGIC OF THE SACRED GROVE TO DO SO. THERE'S SO MUCH RAW POWER IN ME RIGHT NOW, I CAN BARELY KEEP IT **CONTAINED**.



THE DOCTOR SAID NO MORE VISITORS!

SETTLE DOWN, NURSE SPRATT. FLY'S FINALLY HERE.

EVERYONE NEEDS TO LEAVE THE ROOM, AS FAST AS YOU CAN, PLEASE.

I NEED TO DO THIS RIGHT AWAY, BEFORE I LOSE CONTROL OF THE WILD MAGIC I'VE COLLECTED.





HOW ARE YOU DOING, BLUE?

BEEN BETTER, I GUESS. YOU'RE ALL GLOWY, FLY.

IT'S BECAUSE I'M HAPPY TO SEE YOU, BUDDY. WE MISSED YOU AT THE LAST COUPLE BASEBALL GAMES.



THE FROG BOMBERS CAN'T GO ON WITHOUT ITS STAR FIRST BASEMAN, SO I'M AFRAID YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO QUIT MALINGERING AND GET BACK IN THE GAME.



JUST HOLD UP THE GAME FOR A DAY OR TWO, AND I'LL BE BACK ON MY FEET.

PROMISE.

WE CAN'T LET THE GOBTOWN CRUSHERS STEAL THE PENNANT.

THOSE BUMS.



GOOD TO KNOW.

IN THE MEANTIME, I'M GOING TO TRY A LITTLE THING TO HURRY YOUR RECOVERY ALONG, NOT THAT YOU NEED IT, BUT--

--JUST RELAX, OKAY?





BACK ON BULLFINCH STREET...

WHO'S THIS BROKEN RAGDOLL?

SAYS HIS NAME IS KAY.

FOUND HIM IN BUILDING UNDER SOME RUBBLE.

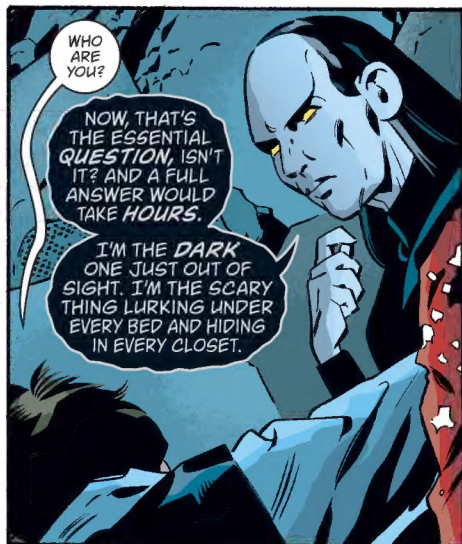


WELL, I CAN SEE YOU'RE A FABLE, BUT WHY ARE YOU ALONE? WHERE ARE YOUR FRIENDS, KAY?

I DON'T KNOW. I WAS ALONE IN BED, STILL RECOVERING FROM...

...FROM WHAT I DID TO MY EYES.

AND THE NEXT THING I KNOW, THESE CREATURES WERE DIGGING ME OUT FROM UNDER MY COLLAPSED BEDROOM CEILING.



WHO ARE YOU?

NOW, THAT'S THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION, ISN'T IT? AND A FULL ANSWER WOULD TAKE HOURS.

I'M THE DARK ONE JUST OUT OF SIGHT. I'M THE SCARY THING LURKING UNDER EVERY BED AND HIDING IN EVERY CLOSET.



MORE TO THE POINT, I'M SOMEONE WHO HAS NO FURTHER USE FOR YOU, SINCE YOU CAN'T ANSWER MY QUESTIONS.

NO! NO! OH GOD, NO!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO ME?!



HAND ME HIS SKULL.

I WANT HIS TEETH.





THAT NIGHT...

WHAT COULD BE TAKING SO LONG? FLY'S BEEN IN THERE WITH BLUE FOR HOURS!



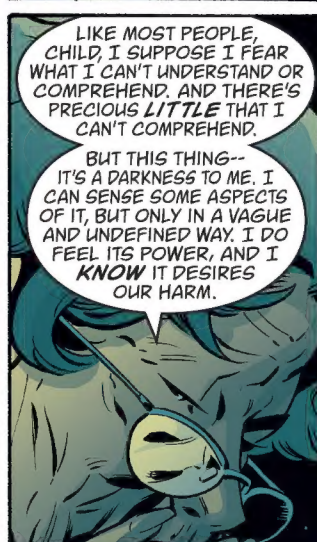
I GUESS IT TAKES AS LONG AS IT TAKES, SWEETIE.



OUR SPELLS SURROUNDING THE FARM ARE STILL STRONG. WE MAY BE SAFE HERE FOR A TIME.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND, FRAU TOTENKINDER. WHAT COULD BE SO FRIGHTFUL THAT IT'S GOT YOU SCARED?

YOU WERE ALWAYS THE TYPE TO TAKE ON ALL HELL WITH NOTHING BUT A BUCKET OF WATER.



LIKE MOST PEOPLE, CHILD, I SUPPOSE I FEAR WHAT I CAN'T UNDERSTAND OR COMPREHEND. AND THERE'S PRECIOUS LITTLE THAT I CAN'T COMPREHEND.

BUT THIS THING-- IT'S A DARKNESS TO ME. I CAN SENSE SOME ASPECTS OF IT, BUT ONLY IN A VAGUE AND UNDEFINED WAY. I DO FEEL ITS POWER, AND I KNOW IT DESIRES OUR HARM.



I THINK IT WANTS TO REDRESS SOME WRONG WE DID IT, BUT SO HELP ME, I CAN'T PIN DOWN WHAT THAT MIGHT POSSIBLY BE.

AND IT'S TERRIBLY CLOSE. RIGHT NOW IT'S BUBBLING AND BOILING DOWN IN FABLE-TOWN. IF WE WERE THERE, WE'D ALL BE DESTROYED BY NOW.



ROSE RED, YOU HAVE TO GET UP.





LEAVE ME ALONE. I'M TIRED.

NO, DARLING, YOU'RE DEPRESSED, AND ALTHOUGH I UNDERSTAND, I CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO INDULGE IT RIGHT NOW. NO MATTER HOW MISERABLE YOU FEEL, YOU NEED TO GET UP.



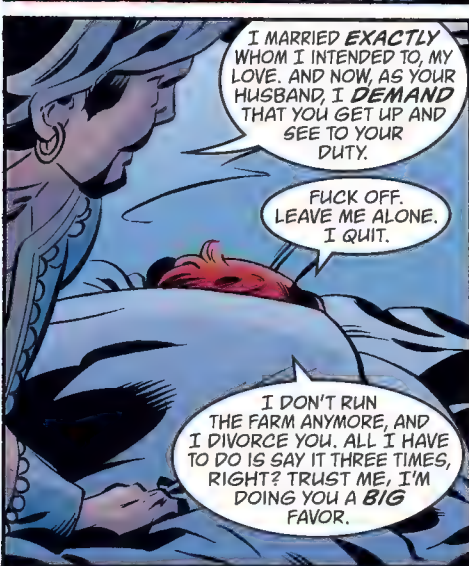
YOU'RE THE FARM'S LEADER. YOU NEED TO BE DOWNSTAIRS WITH THE OTHERS, PARTICIPATING IN BLUE'S VIGIL. SORRY, BUT YOU SIMPLY CAN'T HIDE AWAY UP HERE.

THEY NEED YOU. *WE* NEED YOU.



THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE *WRONG*, SINBAD, DARLING. NO ONE NEEDS ME FOR NOTHING. DON'T YOU GET IT? I'M THE *BAD* SISTER. I'M THE PERENNIAL FUCKUP.

YOU MARRIED THE *WRONG* SISTER. *SNOW'S* THE LEADER. SHE'LL TAKE OVER DOWN THERE. JUST WATCH AND WAIT.



I MARRIED *EXACTLY* WHOM I INTENDED TO, MY LOVE. AND NOW, AS YOUR HUSBAND, I *DEMAND* THAT YOU GET UP AND SEE TO YOUR DUTY.

FUCK OFF. LEAVE ME ALONE. I QUIT.

I DON'T RUN THE FARM ANYMORE, AND I DIVORCE YOU. ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SAY IT THREE TIMES, RIGHT? TRUST ME, I'M DOING YOU A *BIG* FAVOR.



I DIVORCE YOU.

I DIVORCE YOU.

I DIVORCE YOU.

HAPPY? NOW, GET OUT AND LET ME *SLEEP*.





HOURS PASS.

I'M SORRY.

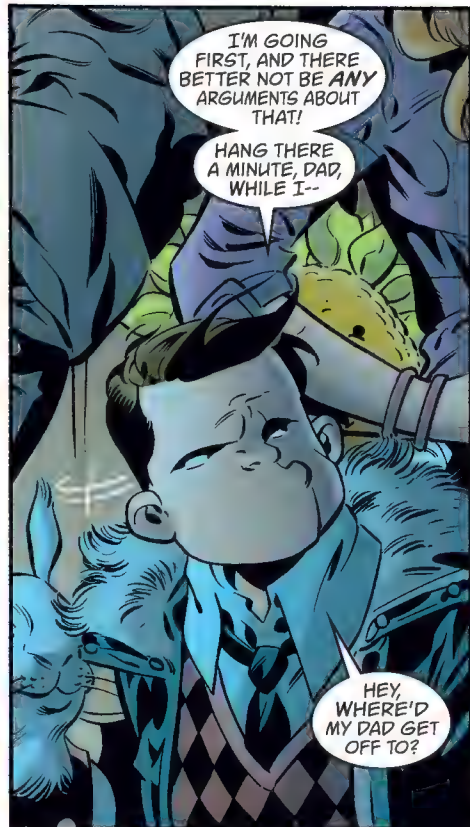
I FAILED.

TRY AS I MAY, I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING FOR BLUE.



ONE OR TWO AT A TIME, WE ALL NEED TO SAY OUR GOODBYES NOW.

I'VE STRENGTHENED HIM AS MUCH AS I CAN, BUT HE WON'T LAST MUCH LONGER.



I'M GOING FIRST, AND THERE BETTER NOT BE ANY ARGUMENTS ABOUT THAT!

HANG THERE A MINUTE, DAD, WHILE I--

HEY, WHERE'D MY DAD GET OFF TO?



ELSEWHERE ON THE FARM...

GOOD TREES.

NOT MUCH MAGIC IN THEM, THOUGH.







ON BULLFINCH STREET.

NOW THERE ARE THREE OF YOU, MY WITHERINGS.

AND SOON THERE WILL BE MORE TO COME, EVEN IF I HAVE TO *SCULPT* THEM FROM THE DULL CLAY OF MORTALS.



AND AS IT LOOKS AS THOUGH I MAY BE HERE AWHILE, I NEED A PLACE TO LIVE-- A PALACE FIT FOR ME. CASTLE DARK.

YES, SIR.

BUILD IT *HERE*, OUT OF THE RUBBLE AND REMAINS OF ALL THE STRUCTURES ON THIS STREET.



AND BUILD IT *LARGE*--EACH ROOM A GLORIOUS CHAMBER.

I'VE HAD QUITE ENOUGH OF SMALL, ENCLOSED BOXES.

AS YOU WISH.

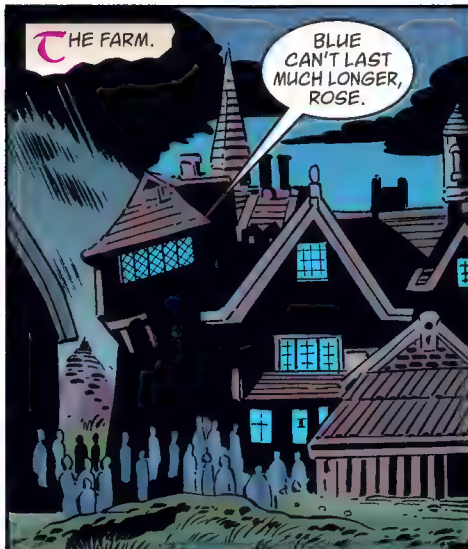


WORK NIGHT AND DAY, WITHOUT PAUSE, UNTIL YOU *FADE*.

THEN I'LL SPIT UP *ANOTHER* OF YOUR TEETH AND YOU'LL TAKE UP YOUR LABORS AGAIN.







THE FARM.

BLUE CAN'T LAST MUCH LONGER, ROSE.



AND EVERYONE'S HAD THEIR CHANCE TO SAY GOODBYE TO HIM.



EVERYONE BUT YOU.

WE'RE HOLDING THE ROOM FOR YOU.

LEAVE ME ALONE!

CAN'T YOU SEE I'M SICK?

I'LL GO SEE HIM WHEN I'M WELL! I PROMISE!

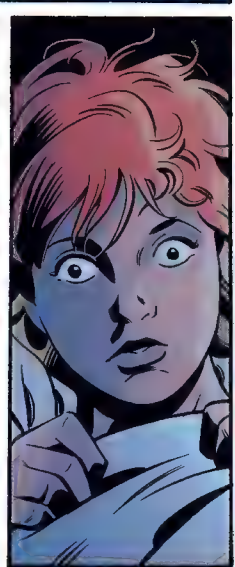


BY THEN IT WILL BE TOO LATE.

HE WAS IN LOVE WITH YOU AND YOU SHOULD AT LEAST--

LISTEN CLOSE, YOU INSUFFERABLE LITTLE BRAT. GET UP NOW AND GO SEE BLUE. DON'T LIE THERE ANOTHER SECOND.

IF YOU DON'T GET TO IT, THEN LEAVE THE FARM NOW AND I'LL NEVER LET SNOW OR ANY OF OUR CHILDREN SEE YOU AGAIN. YOU WOULDN'T ENJOY THE CONSEQUENCES.







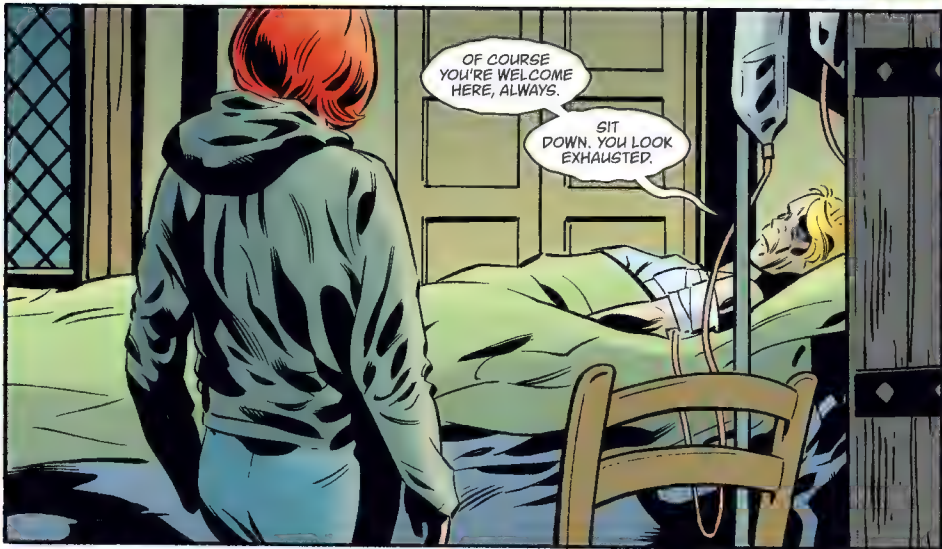
BLUE?  
IT'S  
ME.  
ROSE  
RED.



I'M  
SORRY I DIDN'T  
COME SOONER,  
BUT--

AND I  
UNDERSTAND IF  
YOU DON'T WANT  
TO SEE ME.

COME IN,  
ROSE.



OF COURSE  
YOU'RE WELCOME  
HERE, ALWAYS.

SIT  
DOWN. YOU LOOK  
EXHAUSTED.



OH, BLUE,  
WHAT HAPPENED?  
HOW CAN YOU  
BE--?

YOU  
WERE SAFE.  
THE WAR ENDED  
AND YOU WERE  
FINE. THIS ISN'T  
FAIR.



I'M AFRAID  
YOU'RE WRONG,  
ROSE. I WAS  
KILLED IN THE  
WAR.

LIKE  
SO MANY  
OTHERS.

TOO  
MANY.





JUST TOOK A BIT LONGER WITH ME.

LATE AGAIN, STORY OF MY LIFE.



HOW'S YOUR HUSBAND?

THAT'S OVER. WE--

IT WAS A MISTAKE. JUST ANOTHER STUPID **IMPULSE** OF MINE THAT--



ANYWAY, WE ENDED IT.

I DID.

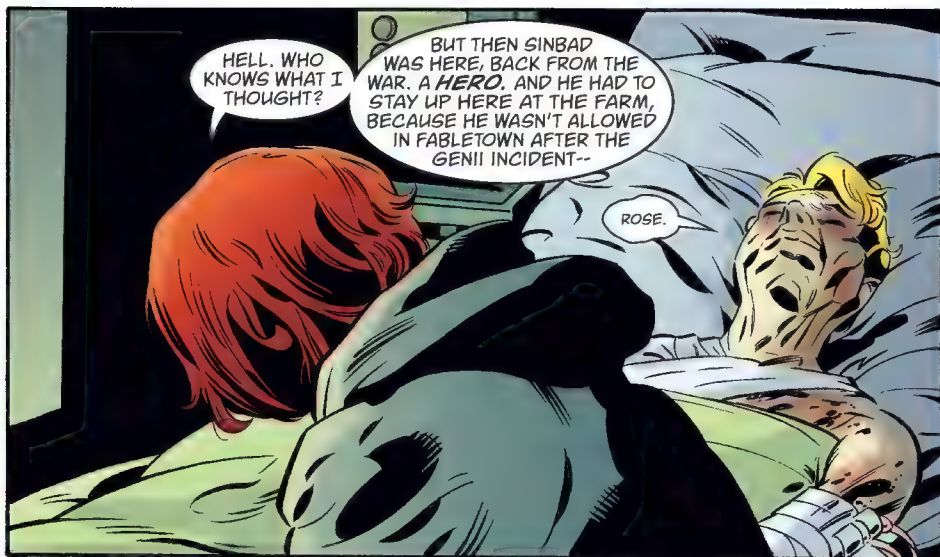
OH?



I THINK, WHEN YOU SPOKE TO ME BEFORE GOING AWAY-- WHEN YOU TOLD ME HOW YOU FELT--

WELL, I THINK THAT SCARED ME, BECAUSE WE WERE SUCH GOOD FRIENDS, AND I DIDN'T WANT TO **LOSE** THAT. OR MAYBE I THOUGHT--

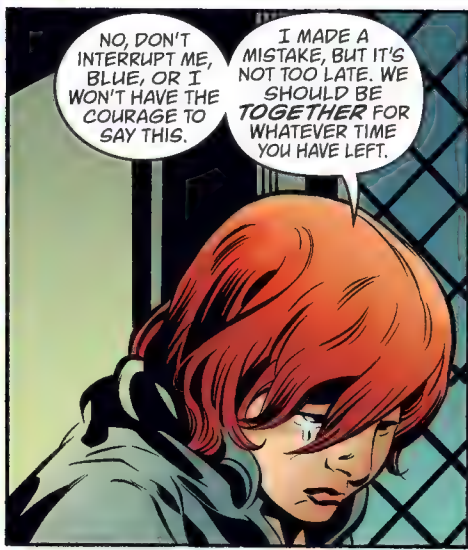




HELL. WHO KNOWS WHAT I THOUGHT?

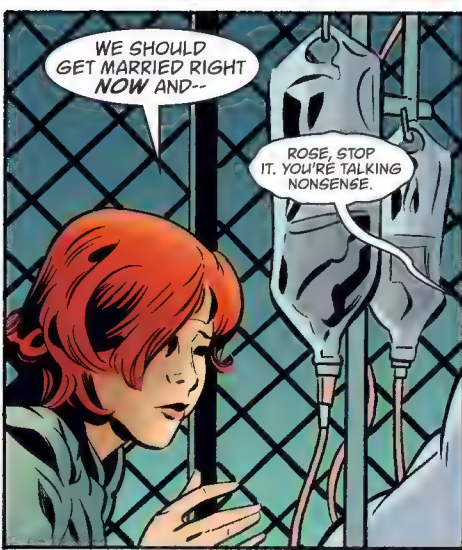
BUT THEN SINBAD WAS HERE, BACK FROM THE WAR. A *HERO*. AND HE HAD TO STAY UP HERE AT THE FARM, BECAUSE HE WASN'T ALLOWED IN FABLETOWN AFTER THE GENII INCIDENT--

ROSE.



NO, DON'T INTERRUPT ME, BLUE, OR I WON'T HAVE THE COURAGE TO SAY THIS.

I MADE A MISTAKE, BUT IT'S NOT TOO LATE. WE SHOULD BE *TOGETHER* FOR WHATEVER TIME YOU HAVE LEFT.



WE SHOULD GET MARRIED RIGHT *NOW* AND--

ROSE, STOP IT. YOU'RE TALKING NONSENSE.



I HATE BEING HARSH, BUT ONE OF THE FEW ADVANTAGES OF--OF THIS-- IS THAT DYING MEN ARE ALLOWED COMPLETE AND BRUTAL CANDOR.

HERE'S WHAT I BELIEVE.



YOU GRAVITATE TOWARDS WHOEVER ADDS THE MOST EXCITEMENT TO YOUR LIFE--FOR GOOD OR BAD.

YOU SLEPT WITH PRINCE CHARMING BECAUSE IT WAS SO WRONG, AND YOU KNEW IT WOULD DESTROY YOUR SISTER.

THE DANGER WAS IRRESISTIBLE.











NEW YORK,  
NEW YORK.

THE  
TRAIL ENDS  
HERE.

GONE  
COLD.

BUT THEY'LL  
RETURN AGAIN. I  
SENSE IT.

IN ONES, OR TWOS,  
OR IN GROUPS LARGE OR  
SMALL, THEY'LL COME BACK  
HERE SOMEDAY AND FIND  
ME WAITING FOR  
THEM.

TIME IS NOTHING  
TO ME. I'M PATIENT  
TO BIDE HERE IN  
CASTLE DARK.

SOONER OR  
LATER I'LL HAVE  
THEM. I'LL HAVE ALL OF  
THEIR WONDERFUL,  
TASTY TEETH.

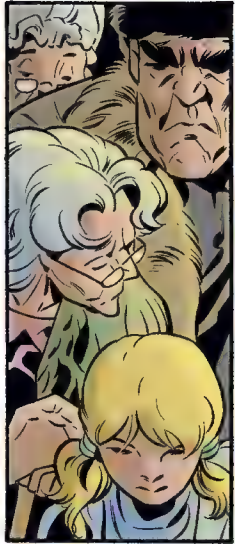
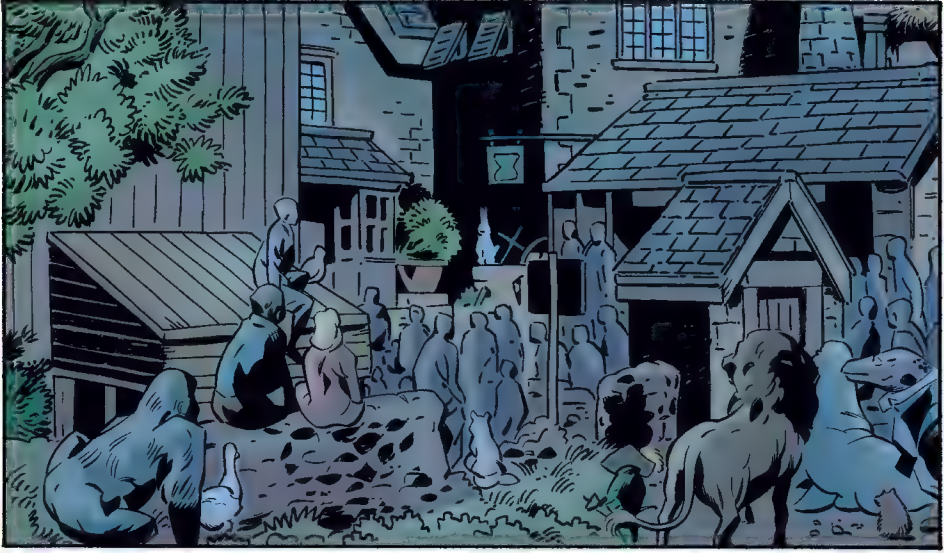
YES I  
WILL.

DO YOUR WORK  
WELL, MY WITHERINGS.  
I MUST HAVE THE FINEST  
HALL TO RECEIVE THEM  
AND TO DWELL IN WHILE  
I RESIDE IN THIS WORLD--  
SOWING MY FEARS  
HERE AND  
THERE.

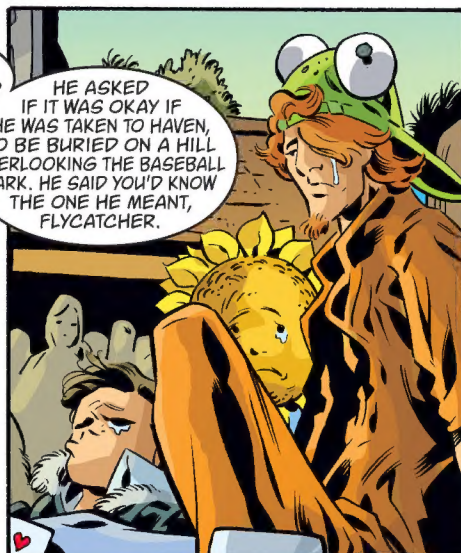
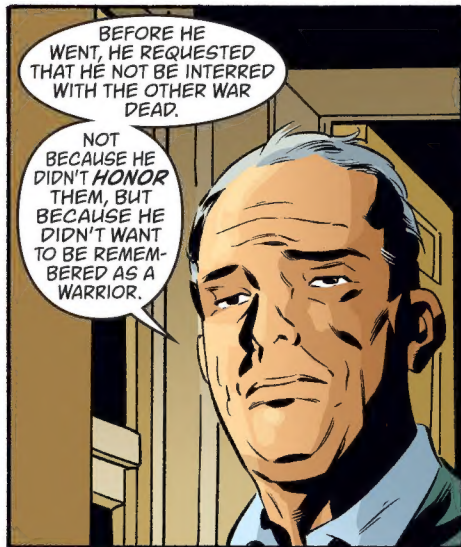
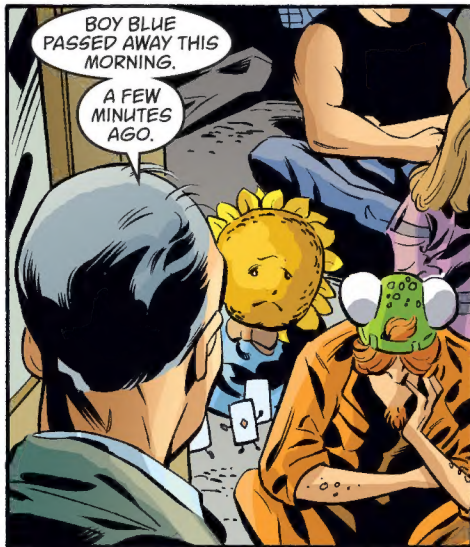
GRADUALLY REMAKING  
THIS CITY, THIS LAND, AND  
THEN THIS WORLD THAT THEY  
LOVE INTO A THING ALL  
MY OWN.

UNTIL THE PLACE  
ENTIRE IS A FITTING  
REFLECTION OF  
ME.













NEXT: WAITING FOR THE BLUES



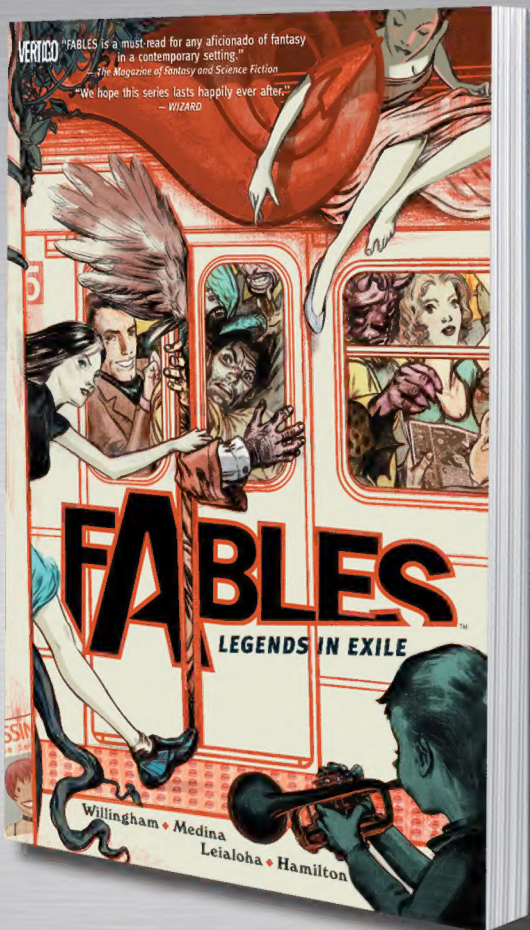
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- VOL. 12: THE DARK AGES
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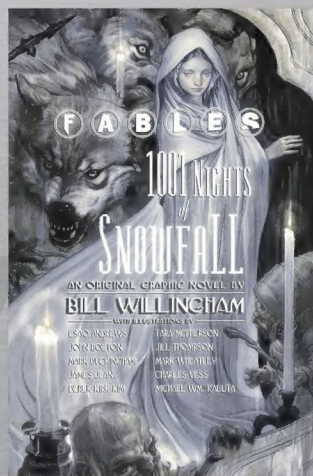
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STORYBOOK LOVE



FABLES VOL. 6:  
HOMELANDS



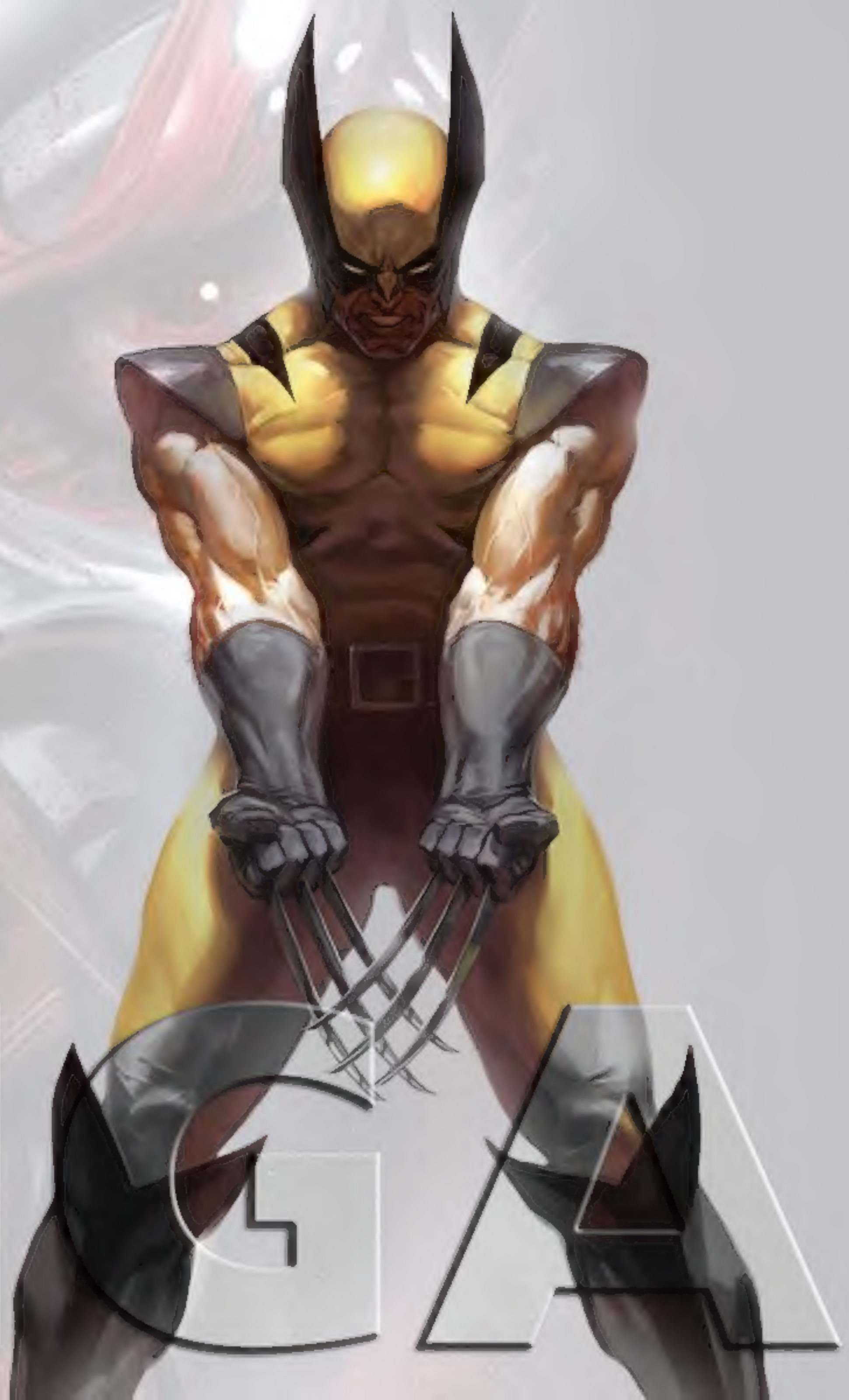
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